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State and Federal News

Robert C. Booker Appointed as New Executive Director of Arts Commission

On October 28, the Arizona Commission on the Arts (ACA) Board Members appointed Robert C. Booker to lead the Commission as its new executive director. Booker's appointment concluded a national search process. Booker will join the Commission on January 3, 2006, having served for eight years as Executive Director of the Minnesota State Arts Board. Acknowledging the unanimous recommendation of Commission members, Cárdenas said, "Bob Booker is a proven arts leader. He has always worked tirelessly to ensure that the arts have a place in daily life. We are delighted he's decided to join us and continue doing so here in Arizona."

"Robert Booker has a terrific skill set, and a record of creating partnerships between arts and other sectors. I look forward to working with him," said Governor Janet Napolitano. "Arizona is poised as a prime destination for businesses, and families and visitors that are looking for vibrant, active, distinctive communities. I look to the Arts Commission to continue and further its efforts in connecting the arts, business, government and individuals."

Among the hallmarks of Booker's tenure at the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) is his commitment to partnerships that expand visibility and resources for the arts. He helped create a partnership that engages the Arts Board, Explore Minnesota Tourism, Minnesota Historical Society, and the Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources and Transportation in activities that promote cultural and heritage tourism in Minnesota. Booker also has been a tireless advocate for arts education and, throughout his term in



Robert C. Booker

Minnesota, worked to further develop the board's arts-in-education programs.

Booker began working at the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) in October 1985. For five years, he administered the agency's Operating Support, Series Presenters, and Touring Arts programs. He served as the agency's assistant director from 1990 to 1997; and was named executive director in 1997. Reflecting on Booker's leadership, MSAB Chair Matt Anderson said, "Look at the Minnesota State Arts Board today and you're bound to see the impact Bob has made in one way or another on virtually every aspect of what we do. And, his efforts have not been confined by state lines—there are few people in the country who have invested as much time and effort in further-

ing the cause of state arts agencies nationwide."

Booker has also been a long-time leader on the national arts scene. He has served as a member of the Washington, D.C.-based National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) board for seven years and just recently completed a two-year term as president of the board.

Booker is eager to continue ACA's mission to provide arts opportunities to all Arizonans. "I am so passionate about fostering and helping others discover the transformative power of the arts in our lives, our communities, and our society. Arizona has a long tradition of being a center for the arts and creative activity. From the extraordinary work created by Arizona's first people to the art forms brought as Americans moved west, to the traditions of our newest residents. I know there are wonderful examples of the creative arts, both professional and amateur in every corner of the state, and I am excited about seeing them firsthand when I start in January and begin my statewide work."

"Arizona is a national leader in respecting its cultural traditions, creating new opportunities for the arts in communities, and supporting the creative economy and cultural tourism," Booker continued. "It is a true honor to be selected to head the Arizona Commission on the Arts. The board and staff are first rate and I am anxious to meet the artists, educators, and arts leaders throughout the state."

Booker succeeds Shelley Cohn, who retired earlier this fall after 20 years as ACA Executive Director. The Commission has 18 staff members and a current annual budget of \$4.4 million.

Important Upcoming Events

Arizona Arts Congress

Monday, February 6, 2006, Arizona State Capitol

11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Where we show our strength in numbers! Arizona Action for the Arts, the Arizona Commission on the Arts, and the Arizona Alliance for Arts Education invite you to wear red and come to the Arizona Arts Congress to show that the value of the arts to Arizonans is strong, visible, and recognized by people throughout the state. Your meetings with elected officials representing your district are key to making the case for supporting the arts statewide.

Arts Congress takes place on the Senate lawn with a large tent, casual seating for lunch, and lively arts showcasing throughout the area. The \$30 registration fee for members of Arizona Action for the Arts or the Arizona Alliance for Arts Education, or \$35 fee for nonmembers covers the costs of putting on the event. To learn more, become a co-sponsor or register by emailing scott@azactionforthearts.org or calling (602) 253-6535 or toll-free at 1-888-950-8050.

Community Workshops

January and February 2006

The Program Directors of the Arts Commission will be holding free Community Workshops at locations near you. These forums are for artists in all disciplines, teachers, arts organizations, community groups, teaching artists, and interested citizens, to come together to share information about projects they are working on and to learn updated news about grants and services from the Arizona Commission on the Arts. Our strategic plan survey recently confirmed that you value the Commission primarily as a resource for information about the arts. Our Program Directors are prepared to help you find the answers to the questions you have: from how to develop a stronger arts presence in your community, to the latest information about Understanding Participation research, to detailed presentations on applying for grants using our online application system (EGOR), to how to grow a healthy and sustainable arts organization. Visit the calendar of events on our website (www.azarts.gov) for dates and locations near you.

Grant Application Deadline

March 23, 2006

Deadline for submissions for the 2006–2007 grants to organizations, schools, and municipalities. We continue to improve our online grant application tool, EGOR, and also the backend functionality for those who applied online last year. Workshops will be held throughout the state in February to demonstrate EGOR for first-time applicants and to refresh and update our current clients on the new features. It is not too early to begin thinking about the new grants cycle and know the timeline for the new submissions. Visit our website to find locations and dates near you.

Arizona Commission on the Arts *the state arts agency*

Through public support of the arts, the Commission works on behalf of the people of Arizona linking the arts and communities. The Arizona Commission on the Arts provides services and funding to help make the connection between artists and communities vital and of lasting value.

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This document is available in an alternate format by contacting the Arts Commission at 602/255-5882.

Announcements about non-Commission-sponsored activities and opportunities are provided as a service. Questions about accessibility or alternative format should be directed to the designated contact.



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Update on the Launch of the ACA Website

Our avid web visitors will be interested to know that we have officially migrated our URL from www.ArizonaArts.org to www.azarts.gov. Should you visit the .org site, you will automatically be redirected to our new URL. Our redesigned website will be unveiled at SWAC 2006.